

**A.J.S. INC.**

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April 18, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
Department of Health and Human Services  
5630 Fishers Lane  
Room 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Sir:

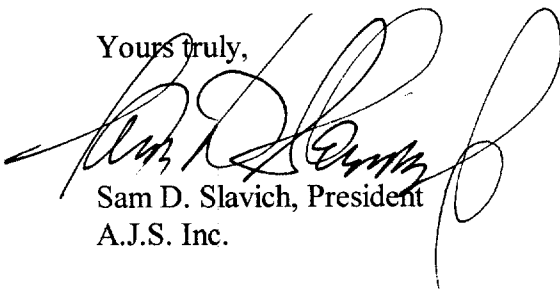
This is to inform you of my support for the establishment of a "non detectable level" standard for vibrio vulnificus in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

As a lifelong oyster cultivator and as a former member of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board and as a former chairman of that board, I believe I have examined this problem from different perspectives. It is my opinion that the v.v. issue has had a profound negative economic effect on the Louisiana, Gulf Coast, and even the National oyster industry.

Any time a v.v. case is reported in the media a significant reduction of sales occurs, especially in the markets in which it is most heavily reported. Additionally the consumer warnings/consumer advisory labels have had a negative effect on our overall markets. And finally negative marketing urging consumers to avoid Louisiana oysters because of v.v. have combined to create an economic malaise stifling our industry.

I have concluded that the only way to put this issue behind us is the establishment of the strict NDL standard.

Yours truly,

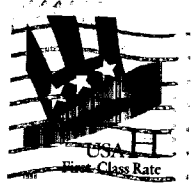


Sam D. Slavich, President  
A.J.S. Inc.

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